/10 cont./

inhabitants, its born owners, the patá-muná and the tarenó, as they themselves call themselves.

Without the Indians this region would be beautiful no doubt; but silent, cold, and unattractive: without a language to give a name to the rivers, lakes, hills and mountains; without feet to trace the pathways and seek the fords in the rivers and the passes in the sierras and the footpaths joining one settlement with another; without imagination to populate these places with fabulous and legendary beings and to explain poetically the great natural phenomena; without heart and without tenderness to welcome in its huts travelers and visitors; and without arms to master and tame the forces of wild nature.

For this is what the Indians who people these parts have been and still are: literati in their fashion, who create tales, legends, and fabulous beings not just with vivid and childlike imagination, but also with a comic cast and an implicit moral; geographers, who know the relief of their land to its tiniest detail; naturalists, who call by their proper names the infinity of beings that make up the flora and fauna of their patria chica /"little homeland"/; engineers, who have traced with the sure compass of their instinct and the robust tread of their feet routes to the four cardinal points among precipices and craggy mountains; and, finally, servants, and even faithful friends with broad shoulders and even more long-suffering and broad souls than those of all of us who have come to their land.

25. Against that evil proverb that says: "neither is the cassava bread, nor the Indian a person," it is necessary to assert, although it be a truism, that the individuals of the copper-colored race are just as much people as are others of the white, black, or yellow races.

Also widely circulated is the opinion that the Indians call the Creoles "rational ones," and that this is a sign that they themselves consider themselves to be irrational. In addition to there being in this a manifest logical contradiction, it has

/12 cont./

(not exempt from flattery), an innate sense of justice before the faults of another whom he judges inexorably, or before his own which he deplores with hasty repentance; a tenderness, superficial to be sure, but quick to bubble over in candid expressions. Together with this he has a delicate feeling of brotherhood, which leads him to share spontaneously with his neighbors his food and his provisions (but not real or personal property). In a word, all that mixture, so full of contrasts, of the qualities and defects of the child: this is the Indian."

342 29. I would not have dared to say so much as: "The Indian is nature," but I do repeat and comment that the Indian is the faithful mirror of the virgin nature in which he lives; and I also say that the soul of the Indian has its most perfect symbol in his house, or maloca. (This word is Brazilian and is the equivalent of bohío, or rustic house.)

342 The maloca is a microcosm: circular at its base, made of sticks and mud (bahareque), with its opening toward the east, it stands upon any hill or rise, as though it were an observatory; conical in its roof of straw or palm, it seems to stick up like a lightning rod to receive all the vibrations of the cosmos which surrounds and envelops it. Inside the maloca is full of budares /baking pans/ brought from the hills for toasting cassava, ollas of clay dug from the lake bottoms for cooking the highly seasoned kumachi or refreshing kachiri, and all the vegetable kingdom from roots and stalks to fruits and leaves, transported in their guayares. Add to all this the animal kingdom, birds, deer, etc., domesticated by the tenderness of the woman and made pleasant by the morning dawn or the evening twilight, and the maloca will appear to your eyes like some new Noah's Ark, floating in the middle of creation, like a rustic temple of nature herself. /13/

181 In this same fashion the Indian lives as though inebriated, 155 dominated and absorbed by nature; when he returns each evening to his maloca with mapire full of fish, with his

/13 cont./

181 guayere /sic/ laden with fruit or with a deer across his back,
155 he comes also with his soul impregnated by nature, which later the magic of his imagination transforms in a thousand ways during the shadows of the night and which he later gives birth to in the form of tales and legends, saturated with phantasmagorias.

155 To understand well the great assimilation of the Indian with nature, we must bear in mente that metamorphosis, anthropomorphism, and animism form, to put it one way, the basis of his mentality, more imaginative than logical.

30. Wise ethnologists have already noted that primitive peoples, who live in an environment of wild and untamed nature, as yet not in the domain of mankind, undergo an extraordinary development of the imagination. And, therefore, if of all it is said that imagination is "the madwoman of the house," when we speak of the Indians we must say that imagination is "the mistress and absolute owner of their soul."

From this great predominance and overflowing of the imagination onto the other intellectual and volitive faculties, I believe to be derived all the moral defects and aptitudes previously listed as being of the Indians: inconstancy, short-sightedness, moral weakness, good humor, simplicity, brotherhood.

774 The imagination of the Indians, in its facet of fear,
155 sometimes terror and panic, populated the clouds with uaranapí, the hills with mauaritón, the mountains with piaimá, the waters with rató and tuenkarón, graves with orodán, hollow trees with amariuak, plains with seipán, and subterranean cavities with tiripuení.

776 Another of the great creations of the Indians' imagination is the Kanaimá, which we shall have to discuss in particular in another section of this work.

Here is complied with, to the letter, the famous phrase of the Latin poet, in which he says, "Primos in orbe terrarum timor deos fecit," for men's fear when faced with great natural

643 When I asked what would happen if the Indians could not agree on any one per-
[37] son as cacique, my question seemed hardly to be understood. "We do agree; we are good; we do not fight." After such assertions, it was finally said that if some to⁹-esa⁹, or several of them, resolutely demanded a different chief the teburu would appoint one for them (he would be called to⁹-epuru⁹), but their chief would be subordinate to the teburu. In fact no such case has arisen in recent times and there are no such subordinate chiefs at present.

645 It is, however, customary for the cacique to delegate some of his functions to a vice-cacique or sub-cacique, called teburu- (or tepuru-) ɛsi-yakon (the exact meaning of ɛsi is not clear to me, compare esa in to⁹-esa⁹, but yakon is "his younger brother" and gives a sufficient clue to the sense of the phrase). This is not a fixed or generally recognized office, but merely one that may be constituted if the cacique desires. The teburu-ɛsi-yakon may, for instance, be sent on official errands to convey the wishes of the teburu or may represent
[24] the latter in his absence. At present this function is fulfilled by Antonio Montesdeoca, nephew of Alejo Calcaño, who served as my interpreter during
645 most of this work. Although no such explicit statement was made, it is obvious
643 that Alejo has trained and is grooming Antonio as his successor and it is agreed that the evident wishes of the old cacique in such a matter weigh heavily in
[177] the selection of a new cacique. It was also stated that the wish for and the fact of growing contacts with the outer world make it desirable (Antonio says "necessary") to have a Spanish-speaking teburu, which at present automatically makes Antonio the only possible candidate, although Alejo is by no means an old man and his successor will probably not take office for many years, by which time the whole system may have collapsed if the present rate of change continues.

[756] The cacique is not a shaman, or piache, at present or usually (nor is the probable successor of the present cacique) and this is neither a requirement nor
756 a recommendation for this office. The piaches, of whom there are several, are specialists in their own field, having nothing to do with the government of
[622] the tribe. Unlike so many Indian societies, the shaman is here entirely non-political and has no civil authority or influence beyond that entailed in the fact that he is ordinarily also a to⁹-esa⁹.

643 The cacique is respected and may be given first choice in the division of
[101] benefits, but he receives no emolument in labor or in goods and in the thoroughly democratic, individualistic society he is merely another, although an out-
[692] standing, individual. His duties are equally vague and light. He arbitrates what few interhousehold disputes occur, represents the tribe in contacts with others or with the Venezuelans, directs community undertakings and generally acts as the father of his people. We saw no instance when his orders were disobeyed and were told that none occur, but his orders are, in fact, hardly more than persuasive presentation of his wishes and opinions.